On both sides of the canal there were many acres of paddy fields. But the agriculturists suffered considerably on account of the brackish water entering the canal from the Kayankulam backwater. In order to prevent this a lock should be provided at the entrance of the canal near the backwater.

There was originally a bridge across the Dhanapadikal canal to serve the people inhabiting the northern side of the canal and resorting to the Kartikapalli bazaar. The bridge had since disappeared, with the result that the inhabitants of the place were subjected to very great hardship during the rainy season. A bridge, suitable at least for pedestrian traffic, should be constructed at the place where the original bridge existed.

Two bridges should be constructed one at Pulikizh and another on the Trikkunnapuzha river, to make the Kartikapalli-Trikunnapuzha road fit for cart traffic. Originally, there were bridges at these places.

Lastly, the member represented about the urgent necessity of improving the Kartikapalli-Haripad road. The road was very narrow and was in a neglected condition, many portions of the road having slipped down into the adjacent canal. Unless improved immediately, the road would totally disappear in course of time.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Oommar Kutti, as you did not give the details of your subject, I am unable to give you a ready answer. But the representation made by you will be referred to the Chief Engineer for report.

51. The Periyar floods and alleviation of the distress caused thereby.

MR. R. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Municipal Council, Parur*) said that much hardship and loss was suffered by the inhabitants of the taluks of Kunnatnad and Parur since the construction of the Periyar dam. If the grievances of the people in the matter were not immediately redressed, the taluks would become completely useless either for agricultural purposes or for human habitation. The British Government derived an annual income of over fifty lakhs of rupees on account of the dam, while the Travancore Government derived only Rs. 40,000 per annum as compensation.

Before the construction of the Periyar dam, the banks of the river were very fertile. The annual floods that occurred before were not so serious as those occurring subsequently, and the floods were beneficial to the agriculturists. But the floods that occurred after the construction of the dam had been very serious, doing lot of havoc to the country and to the people. The floods of 1075, 1084 and 1099 M. E. were unusually by heavy and caused much havoc in the taluks of Kunnatnad and Parur. Again, on account of the dam, the agriculturists suffered much for want of water during the summer season.

For allevating the distress caused by the dam the member suggested some remedial measures to be adopted immediately. The practice of opening the sluices of the dam suddenly when the

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water had risen up in the Periyar lake was one of the main reasons for the floods. This could be prevented by providing sluices in the dam above the ordinary water level in the lake, to enable the surplus water to flow out automatically. This would also prevent scarcity of water keenly felt during the summer season. A committee of experts should be appointed to investigate and report about the matter and the Government should take necessary steps according to the recommendation of the committee.

Another matter that could be easily arranged with the authorities in control of the working of the dam, for obviating the difficulties, was to let out water through the sluices of the dam even earlier than the flood season, retaining in the dam only so much water as was absolutely necessary. This would greatly diminish the force of the flood. Along with this, if the Munambam bar was also sufficiently deepened, the havoc caused by the flood water would not be great. The Munambam bar if deepened and improved would also serve as a useful port in the State, affording better facilities of shipping than at the ports of Alleppey or Cochin. It would also be highly beneficial to extend the railway line from Alwaye to Munambam. This would give a great impetus to the devolopment of trade in the State.

The member next enumerated the various hardships suffered by the inhabitants of the two taluks during flood times and said that the relief measures adopted by the Government were not at all sufficient. During times of heavy flood thousands of people were rendered homeless and subjected to starvation for days together till the flood subsided. On these occasions, the Government used to sanction a small amount for flood relief, which was found to be quite inadequate to alleviate the distress of the starving people. The Government officers were not at all sympathetic towards the flood-stricken people.

The member finally requested that at least Rs. 40,000, which the Government were getting annually from the British Government as compensation for diverting the Periyar waters, should be spent in the taluks of Kunnatnad and Parur, which were adversely affected by the dam, for the purpose of feeding the people of the flood stricken areas during times of flood, for the restoration of their dwelling houses and for compensating them for loss of crops, etc.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Padmanabha Pillai, the rules regulating the working of the dam have recently been revised, and have been sent to the Chief Engineer. I told the previous speaker that I would ask the Chief Engineer to look into the matter. But, it should be remembered that the Periyar dam also holds up excess of water and probably prevents greater floods.

MEMBER : Not so.

DEWAN : Yes, probably.

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